

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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SUBJ: JACOVIELLO ARTICLE IN LE MONDE MAO'S DEATH SPARKS
CONTROVERSY ON PCI RELATIONS

REF: STATE 228704; PARIS 5012; ROME 15042 (NOTAL)

1. MAO'S DEATH PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PCI TO TEST CHINESE WILLINGNESS TO REOPEN PARTY RELATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN NON-EXISTENT FOR OVER A DECADE. BESIDES EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES, THE PCI CLEARLY WISHED (IN THE WORDS OF PCI FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECRETARIAT HEAD PAJETTA) "TO REOPEN A DIALOG." THE PCI SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN CAUGHT SOMEWHAT OFF GUARD BY THE CHINESE PARTY'S SHARP AND EMBARRASSING REJECTION OF THE PCI'S CONDOLENCE MESSAGE. THE SEPTEMBER 17 ISSUE OF THE PCI'S WEEKLY JOURNAL, RINASCITA (ALREADY ON THE PRESSES BEFORE THE CHINESE REBUFF) IS EXPANSIVELY DEDICATED TO MAO AND THE CHINESE PARTY.

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2. VOICING "REGRET AND SURPRISE" OVER THE CHINESE REACTION,

PAJETTA CALLED IT A CONTINUATION OF AN "INCOMPREHENSIBLE" AND LONG-OUTDATED PRACTICE OF ATTACKING DIFFERING VIEWS BY POLEMICS AND SLOGANS. ENUMERATING A NUMBER OF RECENT FRUITLESS OVERTURES TO THE CHINESE, PAJETTA PLACED THE BLAME ENTIRELY ON THE CHINESE SIDE FOR THE LACK OF PCI RELATIONS WITH THE CHINESE PARTY.

3. THE CHINESE REBUFF WILL UNDOUBTEDLY FUEL THE SMALL CONTROVERSY SPARKED BY AN ARTICLE IN LE MONDE'S SEPT. 12 EDITION BY L'UNITA'S SPECIAL FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT ALBERTO JACOVIELLO. THE ARTICLE IN EFFECT BLAMES THE PCI LEADERSHIP FOR FAILURE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE CHINESE PARTY, THE IMPLICATION BEING THAT THE PCI'S TIES TO THE CPSU PREVENTED SUCH A COURSE. L'UNITA (SEPT. 13) PROMPTLY PUBLISHED A BRIEF BUT CATEGORICAL DISCLAIMER: JACOVIELLO'S ARTICLE REPRESENTED NOTHING MORE THAN THE AUTHOR'S PERSONAL VIEWS WHICH WERE, MOREOVER, "DEFORMATIONS OF THE LINE FOLLOWED BY THE PCI." COMMENT. IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT JACOVIELLO HAS LONG EXPRESSED SIMILAR VIEWS ON CHINA (HE IS MORE ANTI-SOVIET THAN PRO-CHINESE), HAVING ALREADY ONCE BEFORE GOTTEN INTO TROUBLE (1971) FOR PUBLISHING A PRO-MAOIST ACCOUNT OF HIS TRAVELS IN CHINA. END COMMENT.

4. IN THE LE MONDE ARTICLE, JACOVIELLO ATTACKS THE SOVIETS FOR MAINTAINING AN "INSULTING ATTITUDE" TOWARD THE CHINESE PARTY. HE STATES THAT MAO'S DEATH HAS AT LEAST HAD THE POSITIVE EFFECT OF PROVIDING "A NEW CRACK" IN CPSU - WEST EUROPEAN CP RELATIONS. CRITICIZING THE EUROPEAN PARTIES FOR NOT IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH CHINA SOONER, JACOVIELLO ASSERTS THAT THE PCI'S CURRENT ATTEMPT TO WIPE THE SLATE CLEAN DOESN'T GO FAR ENOUGH SINCE IT DOESN'T COME TO GRIPS WITH THE ROOT ISSUE--SOVIET HEGEMONY. THE ITALIAN AND FRENCH CP ATTEMPTS TO ASSERT THEIR AUTONOMY WILL COME TO NAUGHT "IF ONE DOESN'T BREAK UP SOVIET HEGEMONY WHICH WANTS TO DOMINATE THE EURO-COMMUNIST PARTIES." IN CONCLUSION, JACOVIELLO SAYS THAT ONE CAN MEASURE THE DEGREE TO WHICH EACH WESTERN CP AFFIRMS ITS AUTONOMY BY THE ATTITUDE THEY ADOPT TOWARD CHINA. "THIS IS THE SOVIETS' SENSITIVE POINT AND PRECISELY WHY IT MUST BE AFFRONTED."

5. IF THAT WERE NOT ENOUGH, THE LEFTIST WEEKLY PANORAMA (SEPT. 21 EDITION) CONTAINS ANOTHER INSINUATION THAT THE PCI'S CLOSE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SOVIET TIES PREVENTED RAPPROCHEMENT WITH THE CHINESE PARTY. IN IT, EX-PCI OFFICIAL (AND NOW MANIFESTO LEADER) NATOLI RECOUNTS HIS VERSION OF THE 1965 PEKING AIRPORT MEETING WITH CHINESE PARTY LEADERS ON A TRIP IN WHICH HE ACCOMPANIED PAJETTA HANOI. NATOLI SAID THAT THE ITALIANS HAD CLEARED THE PEKING STOP WITH THE SUSLOV IN MOSCOW ON THE WAY TO HANOI; PAJETTA DENIED THAT THE PEKING MEETING (THE LAST BETWEEN THE PCI AND THE CHINESE) WAS ANYTHING MORE THAN AN ACCIDENTAL AND UNPLANNED

TECHNICAL STOP.

6. OBVIOUSLY RESPONDING TO THE JACOVIELLO AND NATOLI PIECES, SEGRE (HEAD OF PCI FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECTION) USED A CORRIRE DELLA SERA INTERVIEW (SEPT. 15) TO INSIST ON THE PARTY'S STRICT AUTONOMY VIS-A-VIS OTHER PARTIES AND TO DENY THE EXISTENCE OF A "SPECIAL" OR PREFERENTIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH MOSCOW. SEGRE'S DENIAL WAS CATEGORIC. "WE REJECT ALL FOREIGN MODELS; WE REJECT ANY CONCEPTION OF A RULING PARTY OR STATE."

COMMENT: JACOVIELLO'S PERSONAL AND UNORTHODOX VIEWS ON CHINA ARE NOT NEW AND ARE A MATTER OF PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. WHILE IT MIGHT BE TEMPTING TO DO SO, IT WOULD THEREFORE BE A MISTAKE TO OVER-EMPHASIZE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LE MONDE ARTICLE AS AN INDICATION OF A POLICY DISPUTE OR SERIOUS MALAISE WITHIN THE PCI. END COMMENT. BEAUDRY

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